

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP) PLANNING MANUAL



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FOREWARD

The "Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws of 2000" (§ 44-146.13 to 44-146.29:2 of the Code of Virginia) mandate certain levels of preparedness for state and local government entities.

Specifically, § 44-146.18 establishes the *Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)* as the agency responsible for overall administrative and oversight functions associated with preparedness across all government entities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These authorities grant VDEM broad administrative powers and charge VDEM with a range of responsibilities including, but not limited to, the following:

Providing guidance and assistance to state agencies and units of local government in developing and maintaining emergency management and continuity of operations (COOP) programs, plans and systems

This manual is provided as an aid in the development and maintenance of Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans. It is intended to offer both procedural and operational guidance for the preparation and implementation of a COOP plan. The manual reflects FEMA Guidelines, Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1), EMAP and NFPA 1600 standards as well as COOP best practices.

The two main tools are worksheets and the COOP Plan Template, which coincide with the seven phases of the planning process. Completing the worksheets will assist in assembling the information necessary to develop the ten critical elements of a COOP plan. Because every organization has a different mission, each COOP plan will be unique. Merely filling in blanks on the worksheets is not a substitute for a plan that allows for the continuance of the organization in the event of a disruption.

The template provides organization for the plan itself. This, in collaboration with the information gathered through use of the worksheets will assist in completing a cohesive and comprehensive COOP plan specific to each individual organization's mission and needs.

If you have any questions please contact VDEM for assistance.

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COOP Planning Manual

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ACRONYMNS AND DEFINITIONS

ACRONYMNS

AAR	After Action Report
COG	Continuity of Government
COOP	Continuity of Operations
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DRT	Disaster Recovery Team
EAS	Emergency Alert System
ECO	Emergency Coordination Officer
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EMAP	Emergency Management Accreditation Program
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
ICS	Incident Command System
ITDR	Information Technology Disaster Recovery
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NWS	National Weather Service
OCP	Office of Commonwealth Preparedness
SMA	Statewide Mutual Aid
VDEM	Virginia Department of Emergency Management
VERT	Virginia Emergency Response Team

DEFINITIONS

Activation – When all or a portion of the COOP plan has been put into motion.

Alternate Facility Location – A location, other than the normal facility, used to process data and/or conduct essential functions during an event. Similar Terms: Alternate Processing Facility, Alternate Office Facility, and Alternate Communications Facility.

Business Impact Analysis – The process of determining the potential consequences of a disruption or degradation of business functions.

Cold Site – An alternate site that is reserved for emergency use, but which requires the installation of equipment before it can support operations. Equipment and resources must be installed in such a facility to duplicate the essential business functions of an organization. Cold sites have many variations depending on their communication facilities, UPS systems, or mobility.

Continuity of Government (COG) - Preservation of the institution of government. Maintaining leadership, through succession of leadership, delegation of authority and active command and control.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) – The effort to assure that the capability exists to continue essential functions across a wide range of potential emergencies.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Coordinator – Serves as the agency's manager for all COOP activities. The Coordinator has overall responsibility for developing, coordinating and managing all activities required for the agency to perform its essential functions during an emergency or other situation that would disrupt normal operations. The first step in the COOP planning process is selecting a COOP Coordinator.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan – A set of documented procedures developed to provide for the continuance of essential business functions during an emergency.

Delegations of Authority – Pre-delegated authorities for making policy determinations and decisions at headquarters, field levels and other organizational locations, as appropriate.

Devolution – The capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from an institution's primary faculty, staff and facilities to alternate faculty, staff and facilities and to sustain that operational capability for an extended period.

Emergency Coordination Officer (ECO) – Serves as the communication liaison between the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, VDEM and each agency. Pursuant to Executive Order 65 (2004), the ECO is assigned the following responsibilities which may have been delegated to others within the organization:

1. Coordinate with the Department of Emergency Management on emergency preparedness, response, and recovery issues;

2. Prepare and maintain designated parts of the COOP plan for which the institution is responsible;
3. Prepare and maintain internal plans and procedures to fulfill the responsibilities designated in the plan;
4. Maintain a roster of institution's faculty and staff to assist in disaster operations and ensure that persons on the roster are accessible and available for training, exercises and activations of the plan;
5. Coordinate appropriate training for institution's faculty and staff assigned to disaster operations;
6. Prepare and maintain internal emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans for the institution's resources (facilities, faculty, staff and assets) that outline a comprehensive and effective program to ensure continuity of essential state functions under all circumstances;
7. Assure the State Coordinator of Emergency Management that preparedness plans for its facilities are coordinated with the applicable local emergency management agency.

Emergency Preparedness – The discipline which ensures an organization or community's readiness to respond to an emergency in a coordinated, timely and effective manner.

Essential Functions – Activities, processes or functions which could not be interrupted or unavailable for several days without significantly jeopardizing the operation of an organization.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact – A congressionally ratified organization that provides form and structure to interstate mutual aid. During a disaster, it allows a state to request and receive assistance from other member states.

Essential Personnel – Personnel designated by their division as critical to the resumption of essential functions and services.

Facility – A location containing the equipment, supplies, and voice and data communication lines to conduct transactions required to conduct business under normal conditions.

Implementation Procedure Checklist – A list of the immediate actions to take once the COOP plan is implemented.

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) – A threat and performance-based exercise program, developed by DHS, that provides doctrine and policy for planning, conducting and evaluating exercises. It was developed to enhance and assess terrorism prevention, response and recovery capabilities at the federal, state and local levels.

Hot Site – An alternate facility that has the equipment and resources to recover the business functions affected by an event. Hot Sites may vary in type of facilities offered (such as data processing, communication or any other essential business functions needing duplication). Location and size of the Hot Site will be proportional to the equipment and resources needed. It is a fully-equipped facility, which includes stand-by computer equipment, environmental systems,

communications capabilities and other equipment necessary to fully support an agency's immediate work and data processing requirements during an event.

Incident Command System (ICS) – A management system used to organize emergency response. ICS offers a scalable response to an incident of any magnitude and provides a common framework within which people can work together. These resources may be drawn from multiple agencies that do not routinely work together. The system is designed to grow and shrink along with the incident, allowing more resources to be smoothly added into the system when needed and released when no longer needed. The key aspect of ICS helps to reduce or eliminate the “who’s in charge” problem.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) – A consistent nationwide template to enable federal, state, local, tribal governments, private-sector and nongovernmental organizations to work together effectively and efficiently to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity, including acts of catastrophic terrorism.

Orders of Succession – A formula that specifies by position who will automatically fill a position once it is vacated.

Reconstitution – The process by which agency personnel resume normal business operations from the original or alternate facility location.

Record Retention – Storage of historical documentation for a set period of time, usually mandated by state or federal law or by the Internal Revenue Service.

Recovery – Recovery, in this document, includes all types of emergency actions dedicated to the continued protection of the public or to promote the resumption of normal activities in the affected area.

Recovery Time Objective (RTO) – The period of time in which systems, applications or functions must be recovered after an outage.

Response – Those activities and programs designed to address the immediate and short-term effects of the onset of an event.

Risk – An ongoing or impending concern that has a significant probability of adversely affecting business continuity.

Risk Assessment or Analysis – An evaluation of the probability that certain disruptions will occur and the controls to reduce organizational exposure to such risk.

Risk Management – The discipline which ensures that an agency does not assume an unacceptable level of risk.

Statewide Mutual Aid – A program developed to assist localities to more effectively and efficiently exchange services and resources in response to declared disasters and emergencies. SMA is a local government program established in partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia. The program provides a framework for resolution of some inter-jurisdictional issues and for reimbursement for the cost of services.

Test Plan – The recovery plans and procedures that are used in a systems test to ensure viability. A test plan is designed to exercise specific action tasks and procedures that would be encountered in a real disaster.

Vital Records, Systems and Equipment – Records, files, documents or databases, which, if damaged or destroyed, would cause considerable inconvenience or require replacement or re-creation at considerable expense. For legal, regulatory or operational reasons these records cannot be irretrievably lost or damaged without materially impairing the organization's ability to conduct business.

Vulnerability – The susceptibility of a division to a hazard. The degree of vulnerability to a hazard depends upon its risk and consequences.

Warm Site – An alternate processing site which is only partially equipped.

BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS AND RISK AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

If the agency has not already completed a business impact analysis (BIA) and risk and vulnerability assessment, this process should be done prior to developing a COOP plan. A properly completed BIA ensures that an agency knows the consequences of a disruption or degradation to its business functions. Risk is the potential for exposure to loss, which is determined by using qualitative and quantitative measures. Vulnerability is a weakness that can subject the organization to a risk, or worsen its impact. Identifying and assessing the vulnerabilities of an agency, and the risks it faces, helps to ensure the most likely risks, with the greatest potential impacts, are considered. These risks can then be mitigated against and planned for. While, the risk and vulnerability assessment documents help to prioritize the vulnerabilities and risks faced by an agency, a BIA helps identify an agency's essential functions.

In collaboration with VITA, VDEM posted a sample BIA Template online with the COOP Toolkit. The template is an optional tool to assist agencies in performing a Business Impact Analysis (BIA). This template serves as a comprehensive resource, allowing agencies to fully assess the business impact on each process for any type of situation. It focuses on the loss of that function and the related impact rather than specific emergency events. The template is designed to be used once agencies have compiled a listing of all of their business functions. Each function then is analyzed and the results recorded. The weights of the risk factors and the organizational nomenclature can be modified by the agency to meet to the individual agency's structures. When all business functions have been analyzed the overall results are then entered into the BIA Overall Template to project an overview of the impact of all functions. The COOP team should then meet to normalize the results and provide consistency. Once final, the COOP team must decide where to draw the line to designate which functions are essential. These essential functions will serve as the basis for the COOP Worksheets found in Appendix A of this manual.

Agency personnel who perform essential functions should be familiar with the risks and vulnerabilities of their department processes and facilities, and recognize how those risks could affect their essential functions. Knowledge of potential risks and vulnerabilities gives them the opportunity to consider possible mitigation strategies that could be used to alleviate some or all of the risks. For example, assessing a facility's location and realizing that an essential piece of information technology hardware, like a server, is located in the basement that has the potential to flood is a risk that needs to be addressed. The mitigation strategy may be to relocate the equipment or elevate it so it is not at risk for flooding.

Risk mitigation strategies can be developed to address locality-, facility- and function-based risks. Examples include:

- **Environmental-based risk.** Severe storms or flooding impact the whole community. Are there enough personnel and resources to respond effectively?
- **Facility-based risk.** This could include a building that is located in a flood plain. Are there vital records, equipment or systems located in the basement?

- **Function-based risk.** An example could be a lack of cross-training or back-up personnel for payroll. If the one person who does payroll is unavailable or could not get to work, could someone else perform the function?

If a risk assessment has not been done previously, **Worksheets #13** and **#14** can assist in identifying risks. Conducting a preliminary risk assessment in many ways serves as a precursor to a successful COOP Program in that it aids in the identification of essential functions, and it identifies critical components of an organization. After identifying each risk, mitigation strategies can be developed and implemented to reduce exposure to known hazards.

The COOP Team and agency leadership can also use the information gathered from their BIA and COOP Worksheets in completing an IT Disaster Recovery (ITDR) Plan. VITA has specific guidelines available online for agencies to use.

Risk Management Guideline:

<http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/Library/RiskManagementGuideline.pdf>

IT Risk Assessment:

<http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/Library/RiskAssessmentInstructions12142006.pdf>

IT Risk Assessment Report Template:

<http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/Library/RiskAssessmentReportTemplate.doc>

INTRODUCTION TO CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING

Virginia state agencies have grown increasingly aware of how all types of events can disrupt their operations and jeopardize the safety of their stakeholders, personnel, and visitors. Emergency planning, including Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning, has become a necessary and required process for all executive level state agencies. COOP planning is the start of a long-term program to help an agency maintain or recover its ability to provide essential services to its personnel, contractors, and visitors during an event. The COOP plan is designed to address the following scenarios:

- Loss of access to a facility (as in a fire), forcing relocation to an alternate facility;
- Loss of services due to a reduction in workforce (as in pandemic influenza); and
- Loss of services due to equipment or system failure (as in information technology (IT) or telecommunications disruption).

Although planning for catastrophes is important, equally important is preparing for events more likely to occur. For example, the probability is much higher that an agency facility will face impacts caused by fire, power disruptions, or flooding than by a catastrophic event. Even more frequent are relatively minor emergencies caused by electrical storms, heavy rains and snow or ice storms that can still interrupt operations. Lack of preparation for common hazards can quickly worsen their impacts, escalating danger and damage to people and facilities. While threats vary, clearly, the better prepared an agency is, the more effective its ability to ensure safety and continue operations, regardless of the event.

COOP Planning Objectives

Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1) outlines objectives of a continuity plan. These objectives have been modified to fit the needs of state agencies and adopted by VDEM as a best practice.

- Ensuring that an agency can perform its essential functions under all conditions.
- Reducing the loss of life and minimizing property damage and loss.
- Executing successful order of succession with accompanying delegation of authorities in the event a disruption renders agency leadership and key personnel unavailable or incapable of assuming or performing their responsibilities.
- Reducing or mitigating disruptions to operations.
- Ensuring that an agency has facilities where it can continue to perform its essential functions during a continuity event.
- Protecting personnel, facilities, equipment, records and other assets in the event of a disruption.

- Achieving a timely and orderly recovery and reconstitution from an emergency.
- Ensuring and validating continuity readiness through a dynamic and integrated continuity test, training and exercise program and operational capability.

COOP Planning Considerations

While Federal Preparedness Circular (FPC) - 65 was superseded by FCD 1 it outlined planning considerations and requirements for federal agency COOP plans. These considerations and requirements are still valid and VDEM still recognizes them as best practices. All executive level state agencies are expected to adhere to these considerations when developing COOP plans as required by Executive Order 44 (2007).

- Be capable of implementing their COOP plans with and without warning.
- Be operational not later than 12 hours after implementation.
- Be capable of performing essential functions for up to 30 days.
- Include regularly schedule testing, training and exercising of personnel, equipment, systems, processes and procedures used to support the agency during a COOP event.
- Provide for a regular risk analysis of current alternate facilities.
- Locate alternate facilities in areas where the ability to initiate, maintain and terminate COOP is optimal.
- Take advantage of existing agency field infrastructures and give consideration to other options, such as telecommuting, work-at-home and shared facilities.
- Develop a Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management Plan (MYSPMP) ensuring that funding is available in future budgets.

COOP Planning Involvement

Effective COOP planning is an agency function. Teams should be composed of individuals throughout the agency who understand and can represent the many functional areas that make up a dynamic state agency. The activities of a team also help build support and buy-in for planning efforts. Responsibility does not lie with a single department or individual, but with individuals at every level within the organization, including:

- Senior Leadership
- COOP Coordinator
- COOP Planning Team
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

COOP Team

The COOP Team includes department or division-level leadership who understand the internal operations or “business” of the agency and have authority in the functional areas they represent.

The COOP Team is more directly involved with daily operations, including strategies and tactics to implement COOP as an integral part of the day-to-day functions of the agency.

The role of the COOP Team includes:

- Developing a mission statement for the team and program;
- Establishing a schedule of ongoing team meetings;
- Establishing COOP program objectives;
- Creating a planning schedule and milestones for developing COOP capabilities and obtaining plan approval;
- Establishing a review and maintenance cycle;
- Establishing a testing and exercise cycle;
- Identifying department-specific management and policy issues and potential solutions;
- Identifying agency-wide issues and proposed recommendations for the COOP Team’s consideration; and
- Advocating for adequate funding to accomplish the institution’s COOP strategy.

COOP Program Organization

While the COOP plan serves as the guide during implementation and recovery, the COOP program is the framework and guidance that makes COOP planning an ongoing activity for the institution. The structure of the program creates specific roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for plan development, maintenance and execution. It fosters COOP planning as a part of day-to-day operations through:

Program administration, including:

- Designating a program manager or coordinator;
- Establishing goals, objectives and evaluation standards; and
- Developing procedures and planning schedules, including milestones and deliverables.

Program elements, including:

- Performing risk assessments;
- Developing incident prevention and mitigation strategies;
- Establishing resource management and logistics processes; and

- Determining needs and opportunities for mutual aid or other assistance.

Elements of a COOP Plan

A viable COOP Plan consists of ten critical elements:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ■ Essential Functions | ■ Vital Records |
| ■ Orders of Succession | ■ Human Capital Management |
| ■ Delegations of Authority | ■ Training, Testing and Exercises |
| ■ Alternate Facilities | ■ Devolution |
| ■ Interoperable Communications | ■ Reconstitution |

These elements are intertwined and dependent upon one another. They enable a plan to be smoothly and effectively implemented during an emergency. Additionally, the COOP components, when properly identified, will provide an easy transition back to normal operations at the primary facility.

Creating a COOP Plan

The COOP planning process is broken down into seven different phases:

- I. Project Initiation
- II. Identification of Functional Requirements
- III. Design and Development
- IV. Publication and Dissemination
- V. Training, Testing and Exercises
- VI. Implementation
- VII. Maintenance

Each process consists of a set of tasks that must be performed to develop an effective COOP plan.

Table 1**COOP Planning Phase Specific Tasks**

COOP Planning Phase	Phase Specific Tasks
I. Project Initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appoint a COOP Coordinator▪ Organize a COOP Team▪ Conduct an Initial Project Meeting
II. Identification of Functional Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Identify Essential Functions▪ Identify Vital Records, Systems and Equipment▪ Identify Key Personnel▪ Establish Orders of Succession▪ Establish Delegation of Authority▪ Select an Alternate Facility▪ Identify Interoperable Communications
III. Design and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Defining COOP Document Scope▪ Entering gathered data into COOP Template
IV. Publication and Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Publish the plan▪ Present the plan to key personnel▪ Educate all employees on their roles and responsibilities associated with COOP plan activation
V. Training, Testing and Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assess and validate COOP plans, policies and procedures▪ Ensure that agency personnel are familiar with COOP procedures▪ Ensure that COOP personnel are sufficiently trained to carry out essential functions during COOP activation▪ Implement After Action Reports
VI. Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outline executive decision process▪ Create checklists for COOP plan implementation
VII. Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Institute Multi-Year Program Management for COOP▪ Establish maintenance and revision schedule

I. PROGRAM INITIATION

Project initiation includes the first steps required to establish a COOP program. A COOP program guides the agency's COOP planning efforts. It is the infrastructure that ensures effective planning is a consistent and ongoing part of the agency. For agencies without a COOP program, this section is intended to guide them through the process of establishing the key components to build one. For agencies with an existing program, these activities have probably already been performed and do not necessarily apply. If a review of the existing COOP program identifies some possible improvements or missing components, selected activities in this phase may be helpful.

The project initiation phase consists of the following:

- Appointing a COOP Coordinator;
- Organizing a COOP Team;
- Identifying and reviewing current planning documents;
- Identifying staff hours and budget; and
- Conducting an initial project meeting.

Appointing a COOP Coordinator

The first step in the COOP planning process is selecting a COOP Coordinator. Although the head of the agency may act as the COOP Coordinator, it is often best for that person to designate another individual who can devote the necessary time to the project.

The COOP Coordinator should be someone who is familiar with federal, state and local emergency management practices, and the hazards faced by the campus. It is helpful but not always necessary that this person also be someone with the authority to develop, implement and exercise plans. The COOP Coordinator should have good leadership and communications skills and be capable of building consensus and support for the program. Responsibilities of the COOP Coordinator include:

- Developing short- and long-term goals and objectives.
- Assisting in the identification of planning team members.
- Creating a blueprint for developing the COOP program.
- Identifying and assisting in resolving issues related to COOP plan development, activation, implementation and reconstitution.
- Developing measurable criteria for measuring and evaluating COOP performance.
- Acting as a liaison between the planning team and agency leaders.

- Serving as a leader to the COOP Team.

Organizing a COOP Team

The COOP Team is composed of individuals from different divisions or departments within the agency. The intent is to gather an appropriate balance between operational knowledge and authority within the functional areas represented by the members. The team typically consists of eight to 12 members; the actual number depends on the size of the agency and the variety of functions performed and services provided.

It is important to represent the full spectrum of services delivered by the agency. When organizing the COOP Team, agencies should include departments or divisions that perform functions or provide services including (department names may vary):

- Administration
- Information Technology;
- Finance
- Human Resources;
- Facilities or Maintenance;

Ensure groups who deliver specialized services or who require unique resources to support their functions are represented.

Identifying and Reviewing Current Planning Documents

The COOP Team should review existing plans to assist in the development and implementation of the COOP program. Some of the planning sources to consider are Occupant Emergency Plans (OEPs), Vital Records Management Plan, and the Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan (ITDR).

Although not all agencies will have or need all of these plans, any which exist may be good resources to consider. Assuming they have been kept current, the information gathered will be valuable in developing a COOP plan.

Identifying Staff Hours and Budget

Establishing COOP planning as an agency priority is critical for the program's success. Planning efforts cannot be successful unless senior leadership establishes them as an important part of personnel roles. Estimating required personnel and contractor hours and funding for COOP planning will help incorporate these activities into the day-to-day operations of the agency.

Conducting an Initial Project Meeting

Once a COOP Team is selected the COOP Coordinator needs to set up the initial project meeting. The project meeting should include the COOP Coordinator, members of the COOP Team and senior leadership if available.

The following topics should be covered during the first COOP Team meeting:

- COOP Project Team Organization; including the team's mission statement.
- Roles and responsibilities of individual members and the team as a whole.
- Team meeting frequency and schedule.
- Definition of COOP Team objectives and deliverables to ensure that work undertaken is relevant to the requirements of the project.
- Project Milestones to enable progress to be tracked against an approved schedule.
- Reporting process to be issued by the COOP Coordinator to senior management.
- Review and approval process.
- Coordination with external response agencies.

Each agency may also choose to develop a cost-planning template so that costs associated with the COOP plan are identified at the beginning of the planning process. Descriptions should be sufficient to ensure that managers not involved with the project can understand the nature of the proposed expenditure.

It also may be necessary for the COOP Team to prepare a list of documents and information that are required to be shared with them during the planning process. Any documents that contain sensitive information should be treated accordingly with special care taken to ensure that the confidentiality is not compromised. Copies may be provided rather than originals.

II. FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING

At the end of this phase, state agencies will be able to successfully identify the functional requirements for a COOP plan. The focus in Phase II is on identifying essential functions and the required resources needed to perform them. These resources include personnel, facilities, equipment and records.

Gathering functional requirements for planning is a three-step approach:

- Identify essential functions;
- Prioritize essential functions; and
- Determine resource requirements for essential functions.

Essential Functions

Every agency provides a wide variety of services, and the task of determining those services that are essential during an emergency may be challenging. Throughout the planning phase, the COOP team will work with leaders to identify essential functions performed by each department. Essential functions, but generally are those that:

- Maintain administrative priorities such as IT services, payroll, purchasing and fiscal operations;
- Protect the ability to perform the agency's mission; and
- Protect the agency's facilities and assets.

In other words, essential functions are an agency's functions that must continue with no, or minimal, disruption.

In order to develop a successful COOP plan, an agency must first determine what its essential functions are. At the start of COOP planning, determining essential functions must be completed before moving to another phase. Essential functions are the building blocks in developing an effective COOP plan; information gathered from this point forward will be determined by identified functions.

Identify Essential Functions

The COOP Team typically identifies the criteria for selecting essential functions. For example, if other departments are dependent on a particular function to continue their operations, then the function is likely an essential function. The most straightforward way of identifying essential functions involves surveying representatives from each functional area. They provide the input on what processes must be performed. For instance, the Accounts Payable Manager understands what processes his or her area must perform, and which can be temporarily deferred – these are decisions he or she makes in the course of normal operations. He or she also can explain in detail the Code of

Virginia, Sections 2.2-4347 through 2.2-4356 and 2.2-5004 that mandate prompt repayment of vendors in a defined period of time.

COOP team members should consult individuals from each department or division of their agency to gain a better understanding of each function's day-to-day activities performed.

Assuming they are kept current, reviewing other emergency plans can help identify essential functions and their supporting processes.

Emergency Priority

An emergency priority is a function that helps meet the basic needs of personnel, contractors, and visitors.

Examples include:

- Communications;
- Physical plant or facilities (utilities, HVAC, water and sewage); and
- Medical services.

Administrative Priority

The COOP plan identifies administrative priorities as the functions that maintain the infrastructure of the agency and enable service delivery. These priorities relate to facilities and grounds, networks and IT systems, transportation and administrative leadership.

Examples include:

- Decision-making and leadership, both agency-wide and departmentally;
- Supporting IT systems and data networks;
- Performing purchasing and procurement functions; and
- Processing payroll.

Prioritize Essential Functions

To help prioritize functions, determine the Recovery Time Objective (RTO) for each function. The RTO is the maximum time period that a function or service can be interrupted, before it must be restored to an acceptable level of operation. When determining the RTO for an essential function, consider factors such as legal, regulatory, contractual or financial impacts of the outage. Loss of reputation, public confidence and other intangible factors also might need consideration.

The COOP Team determines the sequence of essential function recovery for the agency primarily by using RTOs. Below are examples of RTOs for essential functions.

Tier I: 0 to 12 Hours – Immediate

An acceptable level of service must be restored within 12 hours.

Tier II: 12 to 72 hours - Necessary

Tier II functions must reach acceptable operation within 12 to 72 hours of activation.

Tier III: 72 hours to One Week - Important

Tier III functions support Tier I and II. It may not be necessary for Tier III operations to reach full operation within the first week following a disaster.

Tier IV: One Week to 30 Days - Postponed

Tier IV are the functions that can be postponed until all functions in Tier I, II and III are fully operational.

Tier V: 30 Days + - Extended

Tier V functions are those that can be postponed for more than 30 days, if necessary.

Table 2
Recovery Time Objective Matrix

Tier	Ratings	RTO
I	IMMEDIATE These functions directly affect the safety of students, faculty and staff or protect and preserve institutional assets.	0 to 12 hours
II	NECESSARY	12 to 72 hours
III	IMPORTANT	72 hours to One week
IV	POSTPONED These functions can be delayed until Tiers I, II and III are operational.	One week to 30 days
V	EXTENDED These functions can be suspended for 30 or more days.	30 days or more

Think about the operational dependence of other processes or services on those under consideration. If a function is necessary to keep another operating, then it may deserve a shorter RTO.

When organizing functions by tiers, also consider that some functions are more critical depending on timing. For example, if employees are paid bi-weekly on the 1st and 15th of each month and an event occurs on the 2nd, then payroll will not be immediately necessary. However if an event occurs

on the 14th of the month, payroll will need to be reestablished within 24 hours. For functions with these time-sensitive characteristics, place them in a higher tier. If appropriate, due to the incident's timing, the function can be temporarily skipped during the recovery phase. **Worksheet# 1** can assist in identifying and prioritizing essential functions.

Once the department and COOP Team have established RTOs for each function, the executive leadership can provide additional guidance for prioritizing all functions agency-wide.

Identify Vital Records, Systems and Equipment

In COOP planning, vital records, systems and equipment are critical in carrying out essential functions. Vital records are records that, if damaged or destroyed, would disrupt operations and information flow, and require replacement or re-creation at considerable expense or inconvenience. Content, not media, determines their criticality. Vital records are most frequently in one of three formats: paper; electronic; or microfilm. Some examples of vital records are:

- Personnel records;
- Research;
- System documentation;
- Operational procedures;
- Contracts;
- Insurance policies;
- Mutual aid agreements; and
- Administrative policies.

A COOP plan includes a system of protection and recovery of vital records for both emergencies and normal operations. Every agency should have a vital records program. COOP planning for vital records includes: assessing any existing vital records program, then addressing its deficiencies; or, if no program exists, developing a program that provides for the effective protection, preservation and recovery of records.

There are two types of vital records for institutions to consider:

- **Static records** – Those that change little, or not at all, over time. An example of static records might be contracts or administrative policies.
- **Active records** – Those that change frequently with daily operations. Examples of active records include accounts receivable and payable and students' course grades.

Both types of records can be vital and should be preserved so that operations can be maintained or quickly resumed following an interruption.

Records management guidance that applies to public institutions in the Commonwealth is issued by The Library of Virginia. For more information refer to Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

Vital Systems and Equipment

As with vital records, it is important to identify those systems and equipment that are essential to the functioning of the agency and the continuance of the agency's mission. Not every system or piece of equipment is vital. The timing of a system's or piece of equipment's use may also determine whether it is vital or not. For example, snowplows are vital during and immediately after a blizzard, but are not vital during the summer. After identification of critical systems and equipment, prioritize how systems and equipment should be recovered in the event of a disruption. When prioritizing, consider the critical processes and service that these systems support. Also, review any IT disaster recovery plan or other plans from the agency.

It is important to consider if a system or piece of equipment is dependent upon another particular system or piece of equipment to be operable. For example, computer systems are dependent upon electrical supply to be operable. Therefore, resumption of power would have to occur before the computer system could be up and running. As with critical processes and services, there might also be a calendar component. A disruption to the electronic tax return filing system would be a greater problem in April than in August.

Review the list of vital records, systems and equipment and assess the best method of protection. The assessment will depend on the nature of the records, system or equipment, but a protection plan for all should include maintenance programs that regularly test the associated protective measures for optimal performance. For instance, backup power generators should be checked regularly.

Develop Safeguards for Vital Records

The development of a periodic review program will assist in the identification of new security issues (e.g., vital record or system access or development) and how to mitigate those issues. The program should:

- Address new security issues that have been identified;
- Identify additional vital records due to policy changes or new agency programs;
- Update information within vital records as necessary;
- Assess vital systems and equipment;
- Detail maintenance programs; and
- Plan for personnel training.

Vital Records Management

Agencies should have a vital records program in place. Annex I of FCD 1 identifies effective vital records program characteristics. For more information on vital records management an agency can also contact the Library of Virginia.

Worksheet #2 and **Worksheet #3** can assist in identifying vital records, equipment and systems and their protection methods.

Identify Key Personnel

Every employee is important to the achievement of the agency's mission. However, like critical processes and services, each essential function has associated key personnel and positions that are necessary to the continuity of operations. They represent strategically vital points in management and authority and underscore the essential functions that must be carried out. If these positions are left unattended, the organization will not be able to meet customer needs or fulfill its essential functions. That is why a comprehensive COOP plan always includes a succession planning and management component in the event these key positions suddenly become vacant. Succession planning and management ensures the continued effective performance by making provisions for the replacement of people in key positions.

Naming key personnel consists of two components: orders of succession and delegation of authority. The creation of an accurate organization chart can aid in establishing these two components.

Prepare a Current Organization Chart

The first step in devising an order of succession is assessing the current organizational structure. If an organizational chart does not already exist it is necessary to prepare a current organization chart by position and function. The chart may include the names of individuals in these positions, but should focus on the position, not the individual in the position at the current time. Under each function, the chart should list the key positions.

When creating an organization chart ask these two questions:

1. What does this function uniquely contribute to the organization's mission?
2. Could this function operate effectively if this position were vacant?

Determine Orders of Succession

Orders of succession are provisions that are implemented when key personnel are unable to execute their duties during an emergency. Departments must establish, communicate and maintain their orders of succession for key positions. This succession may be addressed through by-laws, codes, ordinances or internal policy. When considering succession, attempt to identify at least two successors to an incumbent. Although succession most frequently goes downward in the organizational hierarchy, it may be necessary or desirable to move upward instead; some positions may require successors from outside the immediate department or even the institution. There also may be situations in which it is necessary to assign successors from outside the geographic proximity.

Skill-sets for incumbent and successor should be matched as much as possible. Any cross-training needs should be considered and addressed when the succession is defined. Also consider the

circumstances when succession would occur; decisiveness and calmness under pressure are both highly desirable. Examples of cross-training to be considered include:

- Timekeeping or payroll entry training;
- Software application training;
- Equipment training; and
- Department or function specific procedures.

Worksheet #4 can assist in designating orders of succession.

Delegations of Authority

After identifying the key personnel, determine which positions would assume the authority of a vacant position. Consider the qualifications necessary to perform the duties of the key personnel as well as the successor positions.

Delegations of authority specify who is authorized to make decisions or act on behalf of key agency or department personnel. Delegation of authority planning involves the following steps:

- Identifying which authorities can, and should be, delegated;
- Describing the circumstances under which the delegation would be exercised, including when it would become effective and terminate;
- Identifying limitations of the delegation;
- Documenting to whom authority should be delegated; and
- Ensuring designees are trained to perform their emergency duties.

Delegations of authority are required by statute in some cases. Certain incumbents in positions specified in the orders of succession are delegated authority to perform all duties and responsibilities of the leader. Authority to act as a successor should be exercised only with reasonable certainty that a superior is unable and unavailable to exercise authority and when immediate action is required. An individual acting as successor should be relieved of his or her authority as soon as a superior on the list becomes available, is able and assumes the role of the successor. An individual exercising the authority of a superior should keep a record of important actions taken and the period during which the authority is exercised.

There are two types of authority that can be delegated:

- **Emergency Authority** – Ability to make decisions related to an emergency (i.e., COOP plan activation). Generally this type of authority last as long as the event exists.
- **Administrative Authority** – Ability to make decisions affecting operations beyond the duration of the event (e.g., hiring or firing or fiscal encumbrance).

Worksheet #5 can assist in documenting delegations of authority and any rules, procedures, or limitations governing their execution. **Worksheet #6** can assist in bringing information together on the resources needed to support essential functions, such as key personnel, external contacts, vendors, equipment, systems and RTOs.

Selecting an Alternate Facility

Some events may require key personnel to relocate to an alternate facility. Relocation will allow personnel to continue to carry out their essential functions and provide support to personnel, contractors, and visitors.

When considering hazards, the greatest likelihood exists that a single building would be damaged or made unusable by a relatively common hazard such as fire, flood, or mold or asbestos contamination. One approach to managing smaller-scale relocations is to develop a matrix of the agency's facilities and their capacities and capabilities, so a suitable alternate facility can be quickly identified based on the building impacted. Consider usable space in offices and conference rooms and also identify capacity for phone and network communications.

Also consider the potential for mobile structures to provide temporary office spaces. There are several types of alternate sites that possess different levels of capabilities.

Hot Site - A hot site is an alternate facility that already has in place the computer hardware, telecommunications, and environmental infrastructure necessary to recover the agency's essential functions

Warm Site - A warm site is an alternate work site equipped with some hardware and communications interfaces, as well as electrical and environmental conditioning that are capable of providing backup after additional software or customization is performed and/or additional equipment is temporarily obtained.

Cold Site - A cold site is an alternate facility that has in place the environmental infrastructure necessary to recover essential functions or information systems, but does not have preinstalled computer hardware, telecommunications equipment, etc. Arrangements for computer and telecommunications support must be made at the time of the move to the cold site.

According to guidelines established in FCD 1, alternate facilities may make use of existing agency or other space –

1. Remote/offsite training facilities. These facilities may include an agency training facility located near the agency's normal operating facility, but far enough away to afford some geographical dispersion.
2. Regional or field offices. Some agencies have a regional office or a field office that could be used as an alternate facility.

3. Remote headquarters (HQ) operations. Some agency HQ operations are so extensive that their operations and the facilities required to support them extend beyond the geographic expanse of the agency HQ host city, and necessitate an additional HQ location(s) elsewhere. One of these locations could serve as an alternate facility.
4. Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for co-location with another agency. One agency may relocate to another agency's facilities. The agency that is relocating could occupy available space in the receiving agency's HQ facility, training facilities, field offices, or other available space.
5. Participation in a joint-use alternate facility. With this option, agencies must ensure that shared facilities are not overcommitted during a continuity situation. Several agencies may pool their resources to acquire space they can use jointly as an alternate facility. An agency may co-locate with another agency at an alternate-facility, but each agency should have individually designated space and other resources at that location to meet its own needs.
6. Alternate use of existing facilities. In certain types of continuity situations, such as a pandemic, a combination of facilities may be used to support continuity of operations (e.g., social distancing).

In addition to an alternate facility, agencies may consider implementing other or nontraditional continuity facility options including:

- 1) Virtual offices – To be effective, this option must provide access to vital records and databases to support the agency's essential functions and the robust communications necessary to sustain an agency's essential functions.
 - a) Work at home/telework. Many agencies have programs that allow employees to work from home. This capability should be leveraged to allow some continuity personnel to fulfill their essential functions while at home or at another off-site location.
 - b) Telecommuting facilities. These can include government funded or other telecommuting facilities. These facilities can accommodate, on a prearranged basis, some continuity personnel, to allow them to fulfill their essential functions at those locations.
 - c) Mobile office. This capability includes the use of mobile kits that can include continuity equipment such as laptop computers, cell phones, and satellite communications equipment, which can be readily transported to a remote location.

The following factors should be considered by each agency when selecting an alternate work site:

Location – Risk free environment and geographically dispersed;

Construction – Safe from high-risk hazards in the areas;

Space – Space for personnel, equipment and systems;

Transportation – Consider public access, public transportation and proximity to hotels and restaurants;

Communications – Support data and telephone communication requirements;

Security – Controlled access;

Power – Electricity for lighting, HVAC and support of essential resources, preferably on a different power grid;

Life Necessities – Access to essentials to support life including food, water and lodging;

Sanitation – Adequate sanitation facilities to support the number of personnel working at the site;

Site Preparation Requirements – Time, effort and cost required to make ready; and

Maintenance – Degree of maintenance required to keep the facility ready.

Selection of alternate facilities is one of the fundamental elements of a COOP plan. However, the potential costs for ensuring that an alternate facility is available and ready when needed can be significant. The cost of a site is directly related to a function's RTO; the shorter the RTO, the warmer the facility and the higher the cost. Due to the criticality of the alternate location and the possible costs associated with that site, it is important that the COOP team provide departments with a consistent set of planning assumptions for use in planning for, and assessing the viability of, alternate facility locations.

Potential Cost Considerations

To alleviate the high potential costs associated with selecting an alternate facility location, the following considerations should be made:

- Ensure that only key personnel relocate and essential functions are performed at the alternate location;
- Consider virtual office options such as telecommuting and video teleconferencing;
- Several departments could pool their resources to acquire space for an alternate facility location;
- Co-locate with another department, but each would have individually-designated space to meet its alternate facility needs;
- Establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or mutual aid agreements with surrounding jurisdictions or institutions; and
- Establish a pre-positioned contract if a lease is required.

Location Guidelines

When considering alternate facility locations, use the following guidelines to determine how far to relocate:

- **Department Specific Event** – Another office within primary facility;
- **Local Event** – Within five miles of primary location; and

- **Widespread Event** – Within 30 miles of primary location, such as another campus of the institution or a sister institution.

Worksheets #7 can assist in documenting requirements for an alternate facility and Worksheet #8 can assist in identifying alternate facility options.

Identify Interoperable Communications

Interoperable communications is critical during events and supports personnel performing essential functions.

In accordance with the National Communications System's (NCS) Directive 3-10, NCS Manual 3-10-1, and other established communications requirements, an agency must:

- Implement minimum communications requirements for its HQs and its alternate and other continuity facilities, as appropriate, which support the continuation of that agency's essential functions;
- Possess interoperable and available communications capabilities in sufficient quantity and mode/media, and that are commensurate with that agency's responsibilities during conditions of an emergency;
- Possess communications capabilities that can support the agency's senior leadership while they are in transit to alternate facilities;
- Ensure that the communications capabilities required by this Directive are maintained and readily available for a period of sustained usage of no less than 30 days or until normal operations can be reestablished, and that all continuity staff are properly trained, as appropriate, in the use of these communications capabilities;
- Satisfy the requirement to provide assured and priority access to communications resources; and
- Have sufficient communications capabilities to accomplish the agency's essential functions from an alternate facility. If the agency's alternate facility is shared with another agency, also have a signed agreement with that agency which ensures that each has adequate access to communications resources.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

Internal and external communications systems used to communicate with emergency and non-emergency personnel, media and other external agencies during COOP events include:

- Commercial land line or VoIP phone system;
- Cellular telephone network;
- E-mail and text messaging (pager, cell phones, PDAs);

- Pagers;
- Alert and notification systems;
- Voice message siren systems;
- National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPSPAC) 800 MHz public safety and critical infrastructure channels (or other region-specific mutual aid channels);
- Satellite phones; and
- Web-based communications.

The agency should provide for redundancy of communication methods in the event that one or more systems are not operational. Operational communications systems at the alternate facility should include:

- Commercial land line or VoIP phone system;
- Cellular telephone network;
- E-mail;
- NPSPAC 800 MHz public safety, critical infrastructure, private business and commercial systems or channels (or other region-specific mutual aid channels); or
- Satellite phones.

Access to critical information systems that support essential functions during normal operations from the primary facility must be available at the alternate facility location. Network connectivity and the data that supports essential functions must also be available.

Worksheet #9 can assist in identifying communication modes that support essential functions, including any alternative providers and modes of communication.

Communications Plans

Communications is one of the most critical capabilities during any event. The ability to communicate internally within the organization and externally to first responders, stakeholders, media and the public is crucial. COOP planning is an opportunity to review existing plans and ensure their effectiveness. External communications is addressed below. **Worksheet # 10** can aid in Developing a Rapid Recall List

External Communications

Public outreach and communication is an integral part of any event that disrupts essential functions of an agency. Most agencies have established public information practices. While developing the COOP plan, it is a good time to review any communications plans the agency has and adapt them to ensure they meet the needs of all types of events and crisis.

The plan may include:

- Media outlets and contacts;
- Methods of communication such as press releases, text message alerts, reverse call, voice-message sirens and building alert systems;
- Designated spokespersons;
- Scripted press releases; and
- Lists of subject matter experts who could be called upon to address certain types of events.

Media can serve as a critical resource to an agency during an emergency. Media outlets are able to quickly disseminate warning messages and special news advisories provided by the agency to the public. Even so, it is important to manage the flow of information to avoid rumors. Agencies should consider including a representative from the COOP Team to serve as media liaison or PIO. A spokesperson experienced in public or media relations has well-developed contacts and strong relationships with local media, which will help improve the speed and quality of communications, especially during potentially tense situations that may arise during events.

The Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) has the following responsibilities when directing the agency's communications plan and media relations:

- Coordinating and integrating public information functions for the agency;
- Developing accurate and complete information on the event for both internal and external distribution;
- Coordinating the overall public information efforts of the agency;
- Conducting public education programs as an ongoing activity;
- Developing and disseminating public information materials and maintaining a stock of materials for emergency use based on hazards likely to confront the agency;
- Periodically briefing the media on local warning systems and warning procedures;
- Maintaining a media contact roster; and
- Providing authorized news releases to the media while keeping senior leadership informed of message content.

Human Capital Management

Human capital management is the process of acquiring, optimizing and retaining the best talent by implementing processes and systems matched to the agency's underlying mission.

During COOP plan implementation, an agency may need to perform with reduced staffing. Human capital management is critical in ensuring the flexibility required of personnel during these times of crisis. Agencies should ensure that all personnel are adequately trained and cross-trained to enable the performance of all essential functions.

During an emergency, personnel need to focus on performing essential functions. This focus will be disrupted if agency members are concerned about their families' safety and security. Agency personnel and their families will appreciate knowing the agency is concerned for their safety; therefore leaders should encourage all personnel to plan for their families' well-being before an event occurs through family planning.

The COOP program should include:

- An emergency call-in number for personnel and staff to gather information regarding the agency operations, type of emergency, pay, etc.;
- Provide guidance and assistance to personnel, staff and their families; and
- Provide guidance regarding establishment of family go-kits. Family go-kits should include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - NOAA weather radio;
 - Water;
 - Non-perishable food;
 - First Aid kit;
 - Flashlight and batteries; and
 - Prescriptions.

Visit the following links for additional information on preparing family go-kits:

- www.VAEmergency.com;
- www.Ready.gov;
- www.nfpa.org;
- www.fema.gov; and
- www.fema.gov/kids.

It is important to ensure that human resource policies support the overall COOP program. The agency's senior leadership and the COOP Team should review the policies and procedures to ensure they allow for flexibility during COOP plan implementation. The COOP Team provides direction to administration to address human resource issues. These issues include:

- Leave policies;
- Labor relations or union contracts;
- Cross-training;
- Contingency staffing plans (internal or external);
- Transportation;
- Employee communication programs or accountability;

- Telecommuting;
- Workers Compensation;
- Family support planning;
- Counseling; and
- Family shelters.

The issue of guiding and monitoring volunteers might arise after an event, before COOP plan implementation. Managing volunteers, including those who respond independently to the emergency, should be considered.

FCD 1 outlines six areas of human capital management that a COOP Plan must address:

1. Agencies must develop and implement a process to identify, document communicate with and train key personnel.
2. Agencies must provide guidance to continuity personnel on individual preparedness measures they should take to ensure response to a continuity event.
3. Agencies must implement a process to communicate the agency's operating status to all staff.
4. Agencies must implement a process to contact and account for all staff in the event of an emergency.
5. Agencies must identify a human capital liaison from the agency's human resources staff to work the COOP Coordinator when developing the agency's emergency plans.
6. Agencies must implement a process to communicate their human capital guidance for emergencies (pay, leave, staffing and other human resources flexibilities) to continue essential functions during an emergency.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

III. DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The design and development phase of the COOP planning process includes development of the actual COOP document and scope, entry of gathered data into the COOP template and finalization of the plan structure.

While utilizing the comprehensive template as a guide, the COOP team will decide the overall character of the plan with the expectation that the final product will vary from agency to agency depending upon each agency's unique nature. The direction of the COOP team will depend on the structure of the agency, the complexity of the mission and the available resources for planning and development. For example, a small agency may opt for a plan which parallels the template from point to point, while a larger agency may develop a plan that is more in depth. Additional plans or special considerations, such as IT, can be supplemented as appendices or annexes to the comprehensive COOP plan.

Depending on the individual needs of each agency, a COOP plan might include some but not all of the following sections:

- **Cover Page** – Identifies that the COOP plan is a confidential document and not subject to public review. Include the following statement: “Not subject to FOIA under Virginia Code 2.2-3705.2;”
- **Privacy Statement** – Describes the sensitive nature of the document and refers any request of the document to the appropriate legal counsel;
- **Record of Changes** – Records all the revisions and updates to the COOP plan;
- **Executive Summary** – Briefly outlines the content of the COOP plan and describes what it is, whom it affects and the circumstances under which it should be executed. Further, it discusses the key elements of COOP planning and explains the institution's or department's implementation strategies;
- **Introduction** – Explains the importance of COOP planning to the institution. It also discusses the background for planning, referencing recent events that have led to the increased emphasis on the importance of a COOP capability for the organization;
- **Purpose** – Explains why the institution is developing a COOP plan. It briefly discusses applicable state and federal guidance and explains the overall purpose of COOP planning, which is to ensure the continuity of essential functions;
- **Scope** – Describes the applicability of the plan to the institution as a whole, the primary and satellite facilities and personnel. Ideally, the scope of a COOP plan addresses the full spectrum of potential threats, crises and events (natural as well as man-made);
- **Authorities and References** – Lists local, state and federal references regarding COOP planning that have assisted in the development of the COOP plan;
- **Concept of Operations** – Explains how the institution will implement its COOP plan and how it plans to address each critical COOP element;
- **Essential Functions** – Addresses the functions that must continue with no, or minimal, disruptions (see page 16 of the manual for more information);

- **Planning Scenarios and Planning Assumptions** – Identifies and defines the planning objectives and considerations that need to be developed by the COOP Team during program initiation;
- **COOP Plan Implementation** – Outlines the executive decision process, levels of emergency and checklists that are utilized during COOP plan activation (see page 38 of the manual for more information);
- **Loss of Access to a Facility** – Addresses the procedures a department will follow to continue essential functions when there is a loss of access to a facility;
- **Loss of Services Due to a Reduction of Workforce** – Addresses the procedures a department will follow to continue essential functions when there is a loss of services due to a reduction of workforce;
- **Loss of Services Due to Equipment or System Failure** – Addresses the procedures a department will follow to continue essential functions when there is a loss of services due to equipment or system failure;
- **Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities** – Identifies key positions within the institution and their responsibilities in the event of an emergency requiring COOP plan activation. It also addresses contact information for internal and external contacts;
- **COOP Teams** – Lists staff members who coordinate the implementation and maintenance of the overarching COOP program for the institution and its departments (see pages 13-14 of the manual for more information);
- **Alternate Facilities** – Lists the facilities that have been identified by institutions to provide continuation of essential functions if the primary facility is unavailable (see page 23 of the manual for more information);
- **Alert and Notification** – Describes the protocols and procedures that are in place to alert personnel via call rosters during an emergency (see page 41 of the manual for more information);
- **Orders of Succession and Delegations of Authority** – Lists successors for essential personnel and defines authority that may be delegated to successors and other key personnel (see page 22 of the manual for more information);
- **Vital Records, Systems and Equipment** – Identifies the policies established by an institution regarding records, software, systems and equipment required to support essential functions at the primary and alternate locations (see page 19 of the manual for more information);
- **Interoperable Communications** – Describes the internal and external communications systems used to communicate with emergency and non-emergency personnel, media, and other external agencies during COOP emergencies (see page 25 of the manual for more information) ;
- **COOP Administration and Support** – Identifies key positions within the department and their responsibilities in the administration and maintenance of the COOP plan;

- **Multi-Year Strategy and Program Management** – Describes the overall management of the COOP program. It includes the names of the members of the Executive Steering Team and the COOP Team. It details their roles and responsibilities (see page 14 of the manual for more information);
- **COOP Plan Maintenance** – Details the activities associated with maintaining the COOP plan and
- **Acronyms and Definitions** – Defines key words, phrases and acronyms used throughout the plan and any terms generally associated with continuity planning (see page 1 of the manual for more information).

The COOP plan might have several appendices, depending on agency-specific needs. For example, there might be appendices addressing:

- Pandemic Influenza Planning;
- Essential Functions;
- COOP Team Roster;
- Requirements for Alternate Facility Location;
- Orders of Succession;
- Delegations of Authority;
- IT Disaster Recovery Plan;
- Vital Records, Systems and Equipment; and
- Communications;

IV. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION

The publication and dissemination phase of the COOP planning process consists of the following:

- Publishing the plan;
- Presenting the plan to the appropriate agency personnel; and
- Educating all agency personnel on their roles and responsibilities associated with COOP plan implementation.

During this phase, the COOP plan is put into effect. After initial publication and training, the COOP plan should become a part of day-to-day activities. Even though the plan is intended to become a part of daily activities, refer any request for a copy of this document to the agency's legal counsel or to the Attorney General's office. The information contained in the COOP plan could potentially reveal the agency's vulnerabilities, would expose agency personnel's confidential information and, according to the Code of Virginia § [2.2-3705.2](#), is not subject to FOIA requests in the Commonwealth.

V. TRAINING, TESTING, AND EXERCISES

The training, testing and exercises phase consists of the following;

- Assessing and validating COOP plans, policies and procedures;
- Ensuring agency personnel are familiar with COOP procedures;
- Incorporating National Incident Management System (NIMS), for personnel with supporting responsibilities within the EOC or any emergency operations capacity during COOP plan activation; and
- Ensuring that COOP key personnel are sufficiently trained to carry out essential functions during COOP plan activation.

The training, testing and exercises program will ensure that personnel are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the execution of the COOP plan. Agencies should make every attempt to undertake joint initiatives for developing and conducting exercises in order to increase awareness of available resources, develop relationships with other departments, involve working groups and committees, participate in multi-department COOP exercises and coordinate with other emergency teams.

Regularly scheduled exercises are critical to ensuring that the COOP plan can be executed during an event. Exercising is one of the most effective ways to discover and document necessary modifications. Exercising the plan will also help institutionalize the process for personnel. Agency personnel who are confident in their ability to implement the plan will be more effective when the time comes to make the plan work during a real event.

A testing and exercise program should be progressive in nature, building from simple, individual tasks to complex, multi-department or jurisdiction interactions. The program should contain activities that build on training and improve capabilities through a series of tests and exercises.

Training

After the COOP plan is developed, all personnel involved in COOP activities should be trained and equipped to perform their emergency duties. Training team members and key personnel will ensure that the agency is prepared to meet the unusual demands that may arise when essential functions are performed in an emergency.

An effective COOP training program includes:

- Individual and team training to ensure the current knowledge and integrated skills necessary to perform essential functions;
- Refresher training for key personnel as they arrive at the alternate facility location; and
- Training courses and materials designed to improve knowledge and skills related to carrying out COOP responsibilities.

According to FCD 1, an agency's training program must include:

1. Annual continuity awareness briefings (or other means of orientation) for the entire workforce.
2. Annual training for personnel (including host or contractor personnel) who are assigned to activate, support, and sustain continuity operations.
3. Annual training for the agency's leadership on that agency's essential functions including training on their continuity responsibilities.
4. Annual training for all agency personnel who assume the authority and responsibility of the agency's leadership if that leadership is incapacitated or becomes otherwise unavailable during a continuity situation.
5. Annual training for all predelegated authorities for making policy determinations and other decisions, at the headquarters, field, satellite, and other organizational levels, as appropriate.
6. Personnel briefings on agency continuity plans that involve using, or relocating to alternate facilities, existing facilities, or virtual offices.
7. Annual training on the capabilities of communications and information technology (IT) systems to be used during a continuity event.
8. Annual training regarding identification, protection, and ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, information systems, and data management software and equipment (including classified and other sensitive data) needed to support essential functions during a continuity situation.
9. Annual training for all reconstitution plans and procedures to resume normal agency operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

Agencies may utilize FEMA's Independent Study Program, particularly, courses IS – 546 and IS – 547 to provide personnel with basic COOP concepts.

NIMS and ICS

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a consistent, flexible and adjustable national framework, which institutions of all sizes can use to manage events, regardless of their cause, size, location or complexity. The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated response structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple events without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

Currently, there are no COOP-specific requirements for training personnel in the ICS or NIMS. However, agencies should ensure that all COOP-related activities supporting or within the EOC in any emergency operations capacity, will meet NIMS implementation measures established by the NIMS Integration Center. Please refer to the following link to view the NIMS Implementation Activities Schedule:

http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_imp_act.pdf

In the table, indicate the number of staff who have completed the courses below (out of the staff you have identified for EOC, response and recovery activities). This is also presented as **Worksheet #12**.

Table 3
Personnel with NIMS Training

	Entry-level First Responders (Unit/Task Force Leader)	First Line Supervisors (Division/ Group Supervisor)	Emergency Management and Response Personnel in Middle Management (Section Chiefs and Branch Director)	Emergency Management and Response Personnel in Command and General Staff (Incident Command & Command Staff)	Executive Level Management for Institutions
IS-700	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
IS-800			[]	[]	
ICS-100	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
ICS-200	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
ICS-300			[]	[]	
ICS-400			[]	[]	

*Gray boxes are not applicable

Testing and Exercise Program

A test is an evaluation of a capability against an established and measurable standard. Tests are conducted to evaluate capabilities, not staff. By testing, institution staff can tell if the policies and

procedures work, as they should, when they should. Testing also validates that equipment and systems conform to specifications and operate in the required environments.

Testing COOP capabilities is essential to demonstrating and improving the ability of institutions to execute their plan. Tests validate, or identify for correction, specific aspects of COOP plans. Periodic testing also helps ensure that equipment and procedures are maintained in a constant state of readiness.

Drills or System Tests are coordinated and supervised activities normally used to exercise a single specific operation, function, or system. They evaluate response time or performance against RTOs; provide training with new equipment or procedures; or enable practice using current skills.

According to FCD 1, an agency's test program must include:

1. Annual testing of alert, notification, and activation procedures for continuity personnel, and quarterly testing of such procedures for continuity personnel at agency headquarters.
2. Annual testing of plans for recovering vital records (both classified and unclassified), critical information systems, services, and data.
3. Annual testing of primary and backup infrastructure systems and services (e.g., power, water, fuel) at alternate facilities.
4. Annual testing and exercising of required physical security capabilities at alternate facilities.
5. Testing and validating equipment to ensure the internal and external interoperability and viability of communications systems, through monthly testing of the continuity communications capabilities (e.g., secure and nonsecure voice and data communications).
6. Annual testing of the capabilities required to perform an agency's essential functions.
7. Conducting annual testing of internal and external interdependencies identified in the agency's continuity plan, with respect to performance of an agency's and other agencies' essential functions.
8. A process for formally documenting and reporting tests and their results.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

Exercises are conducted to validate elements of the COOP plan, both individually and collectively. Exercises should be realistic simulations of an emergency, during which individuals and departments perform the tasks that are expected of them in a real event. Exercises should: promote preparedness; improve the response capability of individuals and the agency, validate plans, policies, procedures and systems; and verify the effectiveness of command, control and

communication functions. Exercises may vary in size and complexity to achieve different objectives. The various types of exercises are described below:

- **Tabletop Exercises** simulate an activation of the COOP plan in an informal, stress-free environment. They are designed to promote constructive discussion as participants examine and resolve problems based on existing plans. There is no equipment utilization, resource deployment, or time pressure. The exercise's success depends on the group identifying problem areas, and offering constructive resolution alternatives. This format exposes personnel to new or unfamiliar concepts, plans, policies, and procedures;
- **Functional Exercises** are interactive exercises performed in real time that test the capability of the agency to respond to a simulated emergency. They test one or more functions and focus on procedures, roles and responsibilities before, during or after an event; and
- **Full-Scale Exercises** simulate emergency conditions through field exercises designed to evaluate the execution of the COOP plan in a highly stressful environment. This realism is accomplished through mobilization of agency personnel, equipment and resources.

According to FCD 1, an agency's exercise program must include:

1. Compliance with the DHS-mandated National Exercise Program (NEP), as appropriate.
2. An annual opportunity for continuity personnel to demonstrate their familiarity with continuity plans and procedures and to demonstrate the agency's capability to continue its essential functions.
3. An annual exercise that incorporates the deliberate and preplanned movement of continuity personnel to an alternate facility or location.
4. An opportunity to demonstrate intra- and interagency communications capabilities.
5. An opportunity to demonstrate that backup data and records required to support essential functions at alternate facilities or locations are sufficient, complete, and current.
6. An opportunity for continuity personnel to demonstrate their familiarity with the reconstitution procedures to transition from a continuity environment to normal activities when appropriate.
7. A comprehensive debriefing or hotwash after each exercise, which allows participants to identify systemic weakness in plans and procedures and to recommend revisions to the agency's continuity plan.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

Table 4
Sample COOP Testing, Training and Exercise Schedule

Type	Participants	Frequency	Location
Drill	Successors	Quarterly	Training Room or Alternate Facility
Tabletop	Key Personnel Successors	Annually	Training Room or Alternate Facility
Tabletop	Senior Management	Annually	Training Room or Alternate Facility
Tabletop	Executive Leadership Senior Management Supervisors	Annually	Training Room or Alternate Facility
Full-Scale	Key Personnel	Annually or Bi-annually	Alternate Facility

After Action Report

Each exercise activity, as well as actual events, should be evaluated and the results incorporated into a formal corrective action process. The results will be used as performance measurements to rate overall effectiveness of the COOP program.

The evaluation of the exercise or actual event will identify systemic weaknesses and suggest corrective actions that will enhance an agency's preparedness. Following the exercise or actual event, a comprehensive debriefing and After Action Report (AAR) should be completed. All data collected should be incorporated into an improvement plan that provides input for annual COOP plan revisions.

Recommendations for changes to the COOP plan should be developed and incorporated into the COOP Annual Review Process. Immediately following an exercise or actual event, recommendations that affect alert and notification, COOP plan activation or implementation, or any operational issues, should be developed and incorporated into the COOP plan. Institutions may also want to reference Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines at www.hseep.dhs.gov. Although agencies are not required to follow HSEEP guidelines for exercises and their evaluations, it is a good reference tool and will be helpful if the agency conducts joint exercises with surrounding local governments, and partner organizations. A sample non-HSEEP AAR can be accessed on VDEM's Web site at www.vaemergency.com.

VI. COOP PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

After an emergency is declared, or a disruption to essential functions occurs, the period of “COOP Plan Implementation” begins with three stages: Activation and Relocation; Alternate Facility Operations; and Reconstitution. Activation is when all or a portion of the plan has been put into motion and procedures are followed for alert and notification. Relocation is the actual movement of a department to an alternate facility. Alternate Facility Operations is performing essential functions at the alternate facility. Reconstitution focuses on restoring business operations to their normal state of affairs. Reunification planning, although not a requirement of COOP, provides a process for families to get information about the incident and those affected and to reunite with their loved ones.

The COOP Plan Implementation phase consists of the following:

- Activation and Relocation
 - Activation
 - Level of Emergency
 - Alert and Notification
 - Relocation
 - Interim Processes
 - Devolution
- Alternate Facility Operations
 - Go-Kits
 - Reception and In-processing
 - Personnel Accountability
- Reconstitution
 - Reconstitution Process
 - Implementation of Reconstitution Plan
 - Reconstitution Manager
- Implementation Checklist

Activation and Relocation

Activation

Many situations may occur that require activation of a COOP plan or portions of the plan. An event that impacts the entire agency, a single office or a department that occupies a building could force COOP Plan Implementation. Two types of activation exist:

- Activation with relocation; and
- Activation without relocation.

Activation with relocation is triggered by any unsafe conditions at the agency's primary location, or infrastructure issues such as loss of utilities or network connectivity for an extended duration, which would make the facility unusable. Activation without relocation can be triggered by personnel issues, such as pandemic influenza, or an enterprise-wide IT outage. If relocation is necessary, initiating the department's alternate facility location activities would also occur during this phase.

Activation: With or Without Warning during Duty or Non-Duty Hours

The COOP plan is activated based on known or anticipated threats and events that may occur with or without warning. The general assumptions for activating the COOP plan with or without warning are described below:

- **Known threats and events (with warning):** There are some threats to operations that might afford advance warning, permitting the orderly alert, notification, evacuation and, if necessary, the relocation of personnel and staff. Situations that might provide such warning include a hurricane, a transportation accident resulting in a threat of a release of hazardous material (HAZMAT) or a threat of a terrorist incident;
- **Unanticipated threats and emergencies (no warning) during non-duty hours:** Event might not be preceded by warning (e.g., earthquakes, arson, HAZMAT, or terrorist incidents) and might occur while the majority of staff are not at work. In these circumstances, while operations from the primary facilities may be impossible, the majority of the department's faculty and staff are able to respond to instructions, including the requirement to relocate following proper notification; and
- **Unanticipated threats and emergencies (no warning) during duty hours:** Event might also occur with no warning during normal office hours. In these circumstances, implementation of the COOP plan, if indicated by the circumstances of the event, would begin after execution of the emergency response or operations plan to support notification, evacuation and situation assessment.

Level of Emergency and Executive Decision Process

A COOP plan also can be activated in part or in whole depending upon the disruption or threat. An event may force personnel and staff to evacuate a single facility for a day or two, which may require executing only the communications component of the COOP plan and IT recovery of data and systems. On the other hand, an agency's offices could be destroyed during the business day, which would require full execution of a COOP plan, including evacuation and pre-planned movement of essential personnel to an alternate facility location that can sustain essential functions for 30 days.

An effective COOP plan outlines an executive decision process for the quick and accurate assessment of the situation and determining the best course of action for response and recovery. It helps to develop a decision matrix or flow chart that ties the department's reaction to the class or

level of emergency. There is no standardized classification for emergencies, but the following model may be useful.

Table 5
Level of Emergency and Decision Matrix

Level of Emergency	Category	Impact on Agency	Decisions	Potential Event
I	Alert	An actual or anticipated event might have an adverse impact of up to 12 hours on any portion of the agency but does not require any specific response beyond what is normally available.	Impacted department alerts appropriate personnel of situation and requests needed assistance. No COOP plan implementation required.	Major weather event forecast to impact area.
II	Stand-by	An actual or anticipated event estimated to have minimal impact on operations for 12 to 72 hours that might require assistance beyond what is normally available.	Impacted department alerts appropriate personnel. Members of the COOP Team are notified and placed on stand-by. Limited COOP plan implementation depending on individual department requirements.	Coastal storm approaching the coastline where agency facilities are located.
III	Partial Implementation	An actual event estimated to disrupt the operations of essential functions for more than three days.	Impacted department alerts senior leadership. COOP Team members alerted and instructed on the full or partial implementation of the COOP plan. Implementation of the COOP plan approved by the senior leadership. Might require the mobilization of all resources. Might also require the	Small fire localized to one wing or floor of the building.

Level of Emergency	Category	Impact on Agency	Decisions	Potential Event
			activation of orders of succession. Might require the movement of some personnel to an alternate facility location for a period of more than three days but less than seven days. Event requires command and control resources be applied to the issue.	
IV	Full Implementation	An actual event that significantly disrupts the operations of essential functions for more than seven days.	Impacted department alerts senior leadership. COOP Team members alerted and instructed on the full or partial implementation of the COOP plan. Might require activation of orders of succession. Might require the movement of significant number of personnel to an alternate location for a period of more than seven days. Event requires command and control resources be applied to the issue, and may require the complete mobilization of all resources.	Gas line explosion has caused extensive structural damage to the facility.

Alert and Notification

An agency must establish specific procedures to alert and notify personnel and staff of emergency situations, including building evacuation required by immediate danger, as well as impending events that have been forecast.

Likewise, notifying, faculty and staff off-hours may be necessary, in which case automated dialers, call trees, e-mail alerts, text messaging, or other techniques should be developed during COOP planning. Especially important is the ability to actively “push” messages and information to personnel. Communications planning is a crucial part of building an effective COOP capability. Alert and notification procedures should be in place to ensure an efficient and effective activation process.

Rapid Recall List

The Rapid Recall List is a short document with a cascade call list and other critical phone numbers. The cascade list should include the COOP Team, key personnel and emergency personnel, both inside and outside the institution. The COOP Coordinator will activate the list and initiate contact with the COOP Team. **Worksheet #10** can assist in developing a call tree or Rapid Recall List if one has not already been developed.

Relocation

Relocation is the actual movement of essential functions, personnel, records and equipment to the alternate facility. Relocation also may involve:

- Transferring communications capability to an alternate facility;
- Ordering supplies and equipment that are not already in place at the alternate facility; and
- Other planned activities, such as providing network access.

Interim Processes

Interim processes are temporary workarounds that can restore some level of functionality until the resources normally supporting essential functions are recovered. Interim processes may be manual ones (e.g., hand-written or typed purchase orders, or hand-written receipts and ledgers for receivables, performed after an IT system or network interruption). They may not be effective alternatives for long periods, but can provide extra time for recovering supporting resources without suffering a complete outage. Interim processes may be documented in procedure manuals or other guides to help personnel continue operations during minor, non-COOP incidents as well. These procedures need to be maintained and updated. Other alternatives may be mutual aid agreements with local governments or agency partners using the same systems. Interim processes can be developed within current standard operation procedures (SOPs) or standard operating guidelines (SOGs) to ensure essential functions continue.

Devolution

Devolution is the capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from a agency's primary operating staff and facilities to another agency. It is also the ability to sustain that operational capability for an extended period, which is also called "fail over." Devolution supports overall COOP planning and addresses catastrophic or other disasters that render an agency's leadership and staff unavailable or incapable of performing their essential functions from either the primary or alternate facilities.

Federal agencies are required to include devolution procedures within their COOP plans, however, devolution is currently not a requirement of state government. *(This section is included for information purposes only. Devolution is not included within the COOP plan template).*

Alternate Facility Operations

Establishment of an organization's alternate facilities takes place within the first 12 hours of activation and may last up to 30 days. Issues to address during this phase include:

- Providing minimum standards for communications and direction and control to be maintained until the alternate facility is operational;
- Activating plans, policies and procedures, transfer activities, essential functions, personnel, records and equipment;
- Securing the primary facility, equipment and vital records;
- Assigning roles and responsibilities to essential personnel;
- Establishing internal and external communications structures;
- Accounting for staff, including supportive personnel; and
- Developing plans and schedules for reconstitution.

In events affecting multiple agencies, alternate facility location resource conflicts may arise. Examples include the services of a shared infrastructure resource such as IT or two agencies that may have planned to use the same facility as their alternate facility location. Day-to-day operations will continue in the alternate facilities until the reconstitution phase has been completed.

Go-Kits

Go-Kits are up-to-date kits containing equipment, reference material, and personal and logistical support items needed to perform essential functions. Even with a well-equipped alternate location, go-kits help transfer critical information and equipment.

The contents of the department go-kits should be updated monthly to keep information and materials current.

Professional Go-Kit

Professional go-kits should contain standard operating procedures, emergency plans, operating orders or regulations, and other relevant guidance that is not pre-positioned at an alternate facility location. Other documents that may be contained in a professional go-kit include:

- COOP plan;
- Current contact lists for personnel and external parties;
- Computer diskettes, CD-ROMs or memory sticks;
- General office supplies (small amount);
- In-processing packet;
- Backup Cellular telephone, Blackberry, Nextel, PDA device; and
- Lists of Current vital records, files and database report and where/how to obtain them

Reception and In-processing

The COOP plan must establish a reception area and in-processing procedures for deployed personnel. Personnel must know where to go to check-in and receive assignment to their workspaces.

Arriving personnel also may need information about hotels, restaurants, laundry facilities and medical treatment facilities. In-processing packets should be prepared in advance of COOP plan activation and provided to faculty and staff for inclusion in their go-kits. The packets should include information, such as:

- Hours of operation;
- Anticipated duration of the relocation, if known;
- Safety and security measures; and
- The information line telephone number.

Personnel Accountability

Personnel accountability describes a process or procedure for identifying faculty and staff whereabouts. COOP procedures must provide for accountability of deployed and non-deployed faculty and staff. Accountability is critical to ensure that:

- All personnel and staff are safe;
- Essential employees have arrived at the alternate facility; and
- When necessary, additional support can be identified quickly.

Reconstitution

Reconstitution focuses on restoring regular operations to their normal state of affairs. This phase is initiated once the event is over and is unlikely to cause additional disruptions. Basic planning for reconstitution should be done concurrently with COOP planning. Event-specific reconstitution planning should begin after the COOP is activated and the situation has been adequately assessed.

Reconstitution Process

After receiving approval from agency executive leadership, the agency should begin salvage operations, and begin planning for one of the following reconstitution options:

- Remaining at the relocation site because it now becomes the new primary site;
- Moving from the relocation facility back to the original site;
- Moving to a new primary site if the original is unusable; or
- Moving to a temporary site while the original is rehabilitated or a new facility constructed.

Implementation of Reconstitution Plan

Once the event-specific plan is developed, institutions need to inform all personnel and staff of the plan, its implementation schedule, and specific task assignments. Executing the reconstitution plan results in the transfer of personnel, supplies, equipment and essential functions from the relocation site if necessary, or establishes that site as the new primary site. Ensure all stakeholders, (e.g., contractors, partners, and regulatory bodies) are notified if needed.

Reconstitution Manager

Because reconstitution can be very complex, many institutions will designate a Reconstitution Manager whose job is to focus solely on reconstitution issues. Typically the manager will not have primary response duties to allow him or her to focus on COOP recovery activities. A Reconstitution Manager is responsible for the following:

- Forming a reconstitution team;
- Developing space allocation and facility requirements;
- Coordinating with appropriate agencies and organizations to find suitable space, if the primary facility is not usable;
- Developing a time-phased plan and listing functions and projects in order of priority for resuming normal operations; and
- Ensuring the building is physically safe and that it meets all local occupancy codes.

COOP Plan Implementation Procedures Checklist

The purpose of this procedures checklist is to give an example of actions to be performed during an event affecting the agency. This checklist is conditionally executed when the COOP plan has been implemented; that is, the appropriate actions are performed depending on the situation. This checklist should be included in the normal plan review and maintenance process and modified as appropriate to fit the unique processes and procedures of the institution. **Worksheet #11** can assist in modifying procedures of the agency.

Two important tasks that you should focus on during the entire event are:

- Ensuring safety and security of personnel, visitors and facilities at all times; and
- Ensuring personnel and visitors are regularly briefed on the status of the emergency.

Table 6
Sample COOP Plan Implementation Procedures Checklist

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
Activation and Relocation			
1	Receive notification of emergency		
2	If necessary, conduct evacuation		
3	Conduct a headcount of personnel		
4	If necessary, contact Emergency Responders (Fire, Police, EMS)		
5	Ensure that safety measures are put into effect		
6	Contact Building Maintenance for shutting down utilities to limit further damage		
7	Direct and assist emergency personnel as required		
8	If necessary, invoke Orders of Succession		
9	Initiate personnel notification using Rapid Recall List		
10	Activate the department's Continuity of Operations Plan		
11	Hold department's response meeting at predetermined site		
12	Assemble supporting elements required for re-establishing and performing essential		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	functions at alternate facility location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vital files, records and databases ■ Critical software ■ Critical equipment 		
13	Assemble remaining documents required for performance of all other essential functions to be performed at the alternate facility location		
14	Initiate external communications for applicable external contacts		
15	Prepare designated communications and other equipment for relocation		
16	Take appropriate preventive measures to protect other communications and equipment that will not be relocated		
17	Make computer connectivity and phone line transfers to designated alternate location		
18	Ensure go-kits are complete and ready for transfer		
19	Key personnel begin movement to alternate facility location		
20	Develop detailed status of situation for senior leadership		
21	Notify remaining faculty and staff and appropriate departments for movement to alternate location		
Alternate Facility Operations			
22	Notify other departments, customers, state and surrounding jurisdictions that operations have shifted to alternate facility location		
23	Organize faculty and staff and account for supportive personnel		
24	Develop shift rotations		
25	Determine which essential functions have been affected		
26	Develop status report		
27	Prioritize essential functions for restoration		
28	Track status and restoration efforts of all essential functions		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
29	Administrative actions to assemble: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Onsite telephone ■ E-mail and telephone directory ■ Workforce office plan ■ Lodging and dining plan, as appropriate 		
30	Occupy workspace: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stow gear and equipment ■ Vital files, records and databases ■ Test telephone, fax, e-mail, radio and other communications ■ Establish communications with essential support elements and office elements 		
31	Ensure all critical equipment, critical software and vital files, records and databases are available at alternate facility location		
32	Coordinate procurement of additional equipment, as required		
Reconstitution			
33	Resume operations		
34	Appoint logistics manager		
35	Inventory and salvage useable equipment, materials, records and supplies from destroyed facility		
36	Survey condition of office building and determine feasibility of salvaging, restoring or returning to original offices when emergency subsides or is terminated		
37	Develop long term reconstitution and recovery plans		
38	Track status and restoration efforts of all essential functions		
39	Conduct transition of all functions, personnel and equipment from alternate location back to designated facility		
40	Determine loss of the department's inventory for insurance report		
41	Schedule initial review meeting with clients,		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	public and vendors to do a briefing		
42	Develop and communicate a press release		

VII. MAINTENANCE

This phase consists of the following:

- Creating the program management process;
- Addressing budget and financial issues related to program maintenance and risk mitigation strategies; and
- Instituting a multi-year process to ensure the plan is updated, when necessary.

Program Management

The COOP program ensures that the COOP plan reflects the current agency environment and that staff is prepared to respond during COOP plan implementation. Several overarching COOP management processes need to be formalized and documented by the COOP team. These processes are:

- Overall program management to coordinate all COOP projects;
- Overall COOP financial management;
- Internal and external communications, including public information;
- Overall command and control structure to provide strategic guidance and set performance objectives across departments;
- Coordination of command and control processes, especially between senior leadership and the COOP Team;
- Legal and regulatory processes to ensure COOP planning stays in sync with legal and regulatory changes;
- A commitment to budgeting for COOP-related costs to accomplish the strategy;
- Plan maintenance that includes regular meetings of the COOP team, multi-year strategic planning and a multi-year testing, training and exercise program;
- Integration of COOP planning with other emergency management programs such as the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP); and
- Overall coordination of personnel and human resource management processes and standardization.
- Examples of COOP-related budget considerations include:
 - Staffing any COOP or emergency planning positions;
 - Accounting for and accommodating COOP and other team members' time expenditures on planning efforts;
 - Funding capital improvement projects needed to mitigate risks and correct vulnerabilities; and

- Supporting staff training needs.

COOP Maintenance Plan

Plan revisions due to changes in the agency's structure, essential functions or mission should be made promptly. Long-term plan maintenance should be undertaken carefully, planned for in advance and completed according to an established schedule.

Major issues to consider in COOP plan maintenance include:

- Disseminate the COOP plan information;
- Designating the review team;
- Identifying issues that impact the frequency of changes required to the COOP plan; and
- Establishing a review cycle that is consistent with current Executive Orders.
- A comprehensive strategy for plan maintenance includes elements that ensure a viable COOP capability such as:
 - Department-specific management and policy issues addressing COOP planning;
 - Schedule for establishing COOP capability and plan approval; and
 - Budget considerations required to accomplish strategy.

Agencies should develop a continuity multiyear strategy and program management plan that provides for the development, maintenance and annual review of continuity capabilities, requiring an agency to:

- Designate and review essential functions as applicable.
- Define both short-term and long-term goals and objectives for plans and procedures.
- Identify issues, concerns, and potential obstacles to implementing the program as well as a strategy for addressing these, as appropriate.
- Establish planning, training and exercise activities, as well as milestones for accomplishing these activities.
- Identify the people, infrastructure, communications, transportation and other resources needed to support the program.
- Forecast and establish budgetary requirements to support the program.
- Apply risk management principles to ensure that appropriate operational readiness decisions are based on the probability of an attack or other incident and its consequences.
- Incorporate geographic dispersion into the organization's normal daily operations, as appropriate.

- Integrate the organization's security strategies that address personnel, physical and adversaries from disrupting continuity plans and operations.
- Develop and implement corrective actions that draw upon evaluations, after-action reports, and lessons learned from TT&E and real world events.

At this time the above requirements are not mandated at the state level but recognized by VDEM as a best practice.

An example of a COOP plan maintenance schedule is detailed in the sample below.

Table 7
Sample COOP Plan Maintenance Schedule

Activity	Tasks	Frequency
Plan update and certification	Review entire plan for accuracy. Incorporate lessons learned and changes in policy and philosophy. Manage distribution.	Annually
Maintain orders of succession and delegations of authority	Identify current incumbents. Update rosters and contact information.	Semiannually
Maintain alternate location readiness	Check all systems. Verify accessibility. Cycle supplies and equipment, as necessary.	Monthly
Monitor and maintain vital records program	Monitor volume of materials. Update or remove files.	Ongoing
Revise COOP Plan Implementation Checklist and contact information for key personnel	Update and revise COOP Plan Implementation Checklist. Confirm and update essential personnel information.	Annually
Train new staff	Conduct COOP plan awareness training for new personnel.	Within 30 days of hire
Orient new senior leadership	Brief senior leadership on existence and concepts of the COOP plan. Brief senior leadership on their responsibilities under the COOP plan.	Within 30 days of appointment
Plan and conduct exercises	Conduct internal COOP plan exercises. Conduct joint exercises among agency	Quarterly, semiannually, annually, or as

Activity	Tasks	Frequency
	divisions or with surrounding agencies, government, and nongovernment entities.	needed

ANNEX A: COOP WORKSHEETS

The use of the theses worksheets is optional. They are tools to help you gather the raw data needed to develop the COOP plan. You may modify them to fit the needs of the agency.

Worksheet #1: Essential Functions Description and Priority

Worksheet #2: Vital Records, Systems and Equipment

Worksheet #3: Vital Records, Systems and Equipment Protection Methods

Worksheet #4: Orders of Succession

Worksheet #5: Delegations of Authority

Worksheet #6: Summary of Resource Requirements for Essential Functions

Worksheet #7: Requirements for Alternate Facilities

Worksheet #8: Alternate Facilities Options

Worksheet #9: Modes of Communication

Worksheet #10: Personnel Contact List (Rapid Recall List)

Worksheet #11: Sample COOP Plan Implementation Procedures Checklist

Worksheet #12: Personnel with NIMS Training

Worksheet #13: Agency Function Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

Worksheet #14: Facility Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

Worksheet #1: Essential Functions Description and Priority

List the functions identified by the COOP Team or the department. Briefly describe the function and why it is essential. Next, assign a priority number in column 3, giving higher numbers to those functions that can be inoperable for longer periods of time. Additionally, more than one function may have comparable priority. Therefore, a department can assign the same priority number to multiple functions. The goal is to determine which functions would need to be operating first in case resources are not available for all functions to be operating immediately. Finally, designate its recovery time objective (RTO) or the period of time in which the essential function must be recovered after an interruption.

Function	Description of Function	Priority	RTO

Worksheet #2: Vital Records, Systems and Equipment

List the records, systems and equipment that are necessary for essential functions for up to thirty days. Include the networks or servers that must be operational as well to support the equipment and systems. Records can be in electronic or paper form. If it is electronic, list the software used. Also, identify the type of vital record – active, static or court.

Do not include records, systems or equipment that may be useful but are not essential to performing the service.

Essential Function	Vital Record	Equipment or Systems	Networks or Servers that must be Operational to Support the Critical System or Equipment	Description	Form and Type of Record or System	RTO
<i>Paying personnel</i>	<i>Payroll Records</i>	<i>Computer; Pay-All software systems</i>	<i>Intel Network</i>	<i>Records are needed to pay personnel</i>	<i>Electronic; Active</i>	<i>Less than 72 hours</i>
<i>Cash Flow Management</i>	<i>Cash Balances</i>	<i>Computer</i>	<i>Direct Website</i>	<i>Monitoring of cash balances and transfers</i>	<i>Electronic, Active</i>	<i>0 to 12 hours</i>

Worksheet #3: Vital Records, Systems and Equipment Protection Methods

For each vital record, system or equipment identified in Worksheet #2, list where the records are kept or where the equipment or systems reside; how often they are backed up, revised or maintained; and any particular methods of protection including security measures. Those vital records, systems or equipment that have no protection, other than back-up or duplicate copies might be candidates for additional protection measures. In those cases, consider and recommend additional protection methods in the last column.

Vital Record, Systems, Equipment	Storage Location	Maintenance Frequency	Current Protection Method(s)	Recommendations for Additional Protection Method(s) (if necessary)	Vendor Contacts

Worksheet #4: Orders of Succession

Using this worksheet, designate the appropriate orders of succession for each essential function. In the first column, list the essential functions located in Worksheet #1, Priority of Essential Functions. In the second column, list the key position or person who is essential to performing the function. Then in the remaining columns, list the positions that would serve as successors if the key position or person is unavailable unexpectedly i.e., illness, injury, vacation or termination of employment, among others. The same successors might be named for different key positions, but avoid designating the same position or person as the first successor to several key positions. Be sure to include both the title of the position and the individual who fills the position in each box.

Essential Function	Key Personnel	Successor 1	Successor 2	Successor 3

Worksheet #5: Delegations of Authority

Identify the function and the type of authority to be delegated. List the position currently holding the authority and who the authority will be delegated to. Then list the triggering conditions under which the authority would be delegated, the procedures to operate under and the limitations of the authority. The first row provides an example.

Authority (Function)	Type of Authority	Position Holding Authority	Delegation to Position	Triggering Conditions	Procedures	Limitations
<i>Contracts</i>	<i>Signature Authority</i>	<i>Attorney</i>	<i>Assistant Attorney</i>	<i>Incapacitated or unavailable</i>	<i>Internal policy</i>	<i>Upon return of the incumbent</i>

Worksheet #6: Summary of Resource Requirements for Essential Functions

Worksheet #6 summarizes the resource requirements for essential functions into a single worksheet. Using information gathered in Worksheets 1, 2, 3 and 4, transfer the relevant information to the appropriate column in Worksheet #6.

Essential Function	Essential Personnel and Back-up	Vendors and External Contacts	Vital Records	Equipment	Systems	RTO

Worksheet #7: Requirements for Alternate Facilities

Identify the requirements for the alternate location by department or division. An alternate facility is a location, other than the normal facility, used to carry out essential functions in a COOP plan activation. Requirements include personnel, back-up power, communications and space requirements.

Essential Function	Number of Personnel	Back - up Power	Communications	Space Requirements

Worksheet #8: Alternate Facilities Options

Agencies should identify at least two to three alternate facilities. One location can be close to the current operations – not right next door, but within a short distance. The second alternate facility should be further away – at least five miles from the primary facility. A third alternate facility should be located within 30 miles to 60 miles away.

Facility	Address	Agreement	Date Executed	Security	Secure Storage Available?	Special Notes

Worksheet #9: Modes of Communication

Identify communication modes that support essential functions, including any alternative providers and modes of communication. Communication systems already in place can be named as alternative modes for other modes of communication. For example, radios could be an alternative mode of communication for voice lines.

Communication System	Current Provider	Alternative Provider	Alternative Mode #1	Alternative Mode #2
Voice Lines				
Fax Lines				
Data Lines				
Cellular telephones				
Pagers				
E-mail				
Internet Access				
Instant Messenger Services				
Blackberry and Other Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs)				
Radio Communication Systems				
Satellite Telephones				
Other				

Worksheet #10: Personnel Contact List (Rapid Recall List)

The Personnel Contact List is a short document with a cascade call list and other critical telephone numbers. The cascade list should include the COOP Team, key personnel and emergency personnel, both inside and outside the local jurisdiction. If this information is available in another document reference the information here or in the plan.

Employee Cascade List	E-mail Address	Work #	Home #	Cellular or Pager #
Agency Director				
COOP Team				
▪ Employee A				
▪ Employee B				
▪ Employee C				
▪ Employee D				
▪ Employee E				
Key Personnel and Management				
▪ Employee I				
▪ Employee J				
▪ Employee K				

Emergency Personnel	Telephone Number(s)
Fire Department	
Police Department	
Ambulance and Emergency Medical Services	
State and Local Emergency Operations Center	
Employee Emergency Hotline	
Alternate Facility Contacts	

Worksheet #11: Sample COOP Plan Implementation Procedures Checklist

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
Activation and Relocation			
1	Receive notification of event		
2	If necessary, conduct evacuation		
3	Conduct a headcount of personnel		
4	If necessary, contact Emergency Responders (fire, police, EMS)		
5	Ensure that safety measures are put into effect		
6	Contact the Building Maintenance Department for shutting down utilities to limit further damage		
7	Direct and assist emergency personnel, as required		
8	If needed, invoke succession of leadership		
9	Initiate personnel notification using Rapid Recall List		
10	Activate the department's Continuity of Operations Plan		
11	Hold department's response meeting at predetermined site		
12	Assemble supporting elements required for re-establishing and performing essential functions at alternate location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vital files, records and databases ■ Critical software ■ Critical equipment 		
13	Assemble remaining documents required for performance of all other essential functions to be performed at the alternate location		
14	Initiate external communication for applicable external contacts		
15	Prepare designated communications and other equipment for relocation		
16	Take appropriate preventive measures to protect other communications and equipment		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	that will not be relocated		
17	Make computer connectivity and telephone line transfers to designated alternate location		
18	Ensure drive-away kits are complete and ready for transfer		
19	Begin movement of key personnel to alternate location		
20	Provide support to local Emergency Operations Center, if required		
21	Develop detailed status of situation for senior leadership		
22	Notify remaining personnel and appropriate departments for movement to alternate location		
Alternate Facility Operations			
23	Notify other local departments, customers, state and surrounding jurisdictions that operations have shifted to alternate location		
24	Organize personnel and account for supportive personnel		
25	Develop shift rotations		
26	Determine which essential functions have been affected		
27	Develop status report		
28	Prioritize essential functions for restoration		
29	Track status and restoration efforts of all essential functions		
30	Administrative actions to assemble such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On-site telephone ■ E-mail and telephone directory ■ Workforce office plan ■ Lodging and dining plan as appropriate 		
31	Occupy workspace: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stow gear and equipment ■ Store vital files, records and 		

Item	Task	Task Assigned To	Date and Time Completed
	databases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Test telephone, fax, e-mail, radio and other communications ■ Establish communications with essential support elements and office elements 		
32	Ensure all critical equipment, critical software and vital files, records and databases are available at alternate location		
33	Coordinate procurement of additional equipment, as required		
Reconstitution			
34	Resume operations		
35	Appoint logistics manager		
36	Inventory and salvage useable equipment, materials, records and supplies from destroyed facility		
37	Survey condition of office building and determine feasibility of salvaging, restoring or returning to original offices when emergency subsides or is terminated		
38	Develop long-term reconstitution and recovery plans		
39	Track status and restoration efforts of all essential functions		
40	Conduct transition of all functions, personnel and equipment from alternate location back to designated facility		
41	Determine loss of the department's inventory for insurance report		
42	Schedule initial review meeting with clients, public and vendors to hold a briefing		
43	Develop and communicate a press release		

Worksheet #12: Personnel with NIMS Training

	Entry-level First Responders (Unit/Task Force Leader)	First Line Supervisors (Division/ Group Supervisor)	Emergency Management and Response Personnel in Middle Management (Section Chiefs and Branch Director)	Emergency Management and Response Personnel in Command and General Staff (Incident Command & Command Staff)	Executive Level Management for Institutions
IS-700	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IS-800			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICS-100	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICS-200	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICS-300			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICS-400			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*Gray boxes are not applicable

Worksheet #13: Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

Various Risk and Vulnerability Assessment formats exist, however the ultimate aim is to identify and reduce an organization's level of risk at an acceptable cost. Two examples are provided.

Risk: Probability of how likely is an event to occur to expose this risk? (H - within 5 years; M - within 25 years; L - within 50 years)

Vulnerability: How severe is the potential impact if this risk is not addressed?

(H - More than 25 percent of essential functions impacted; M - 5 percent to 25 percent of essential functions impacted; L - <5 percent of essential functions impacted)

If a risk assessment has not previously been completed, use the following worksheet to identify current risk and vulnerabilities faced by local governments.

Function Risk Overview

Risk Overview	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Organization's succession plans not in place	H	H	Currently there are no succession plans in place for Agency leadership
Inadequate alternate site recovery procedures			
Inadequate building and physical security			
Inadequate fire suppression equipment	L	L	All facilities are equipped with fire suppression equipment
Inadequate off-site storage of documents and files			
Inadequate record and file back-up procedures and record keeping			
Insufficient staffing or training			
Insufficient virus and hacker protection			
Key employee back-ups either not designated or not sufficiently cross-trained			

Risk Overview	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Lack of alternate voice and emergency communications networks			
Lack of interoperability of emergency communications networks			
No adequate alternate site designated			
No alternate power sources for department location			
No secure fire protected onsite storage of documents and files			
Single point of failure for equipment and or networks			
Unsafe physical condition of department office or building			
Lack of procedures and testing for record and file recovery			

Worksheet #14: Facility Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

A facility Risk and Vulnerability Assessment is an evaluation of the facility risks and vulnerabilities that have the potential for consequences of property damage, business interruption or human injury.

Note: This worksheet should be completed for each key facility and by the person responsible for facility maintenance either within the local jurisdiction or building. Agencies can refer to their existing locality's Hazard Mitigation Plan for additional facility risk and vulnerabilities that may have been identified.

Risk Level: H - applies at all times; M - applies only some of the time; L - rarely applies

Vulnerability: H - impact to the operations will be great if the event did occur; M - impacts some of the operations, but not all of the operations; L - minimal impact to critical operations

Facility Risk Overview – Air Conditioning

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are air conditioning system and power supply separate from the rest of the facility?				
Is there back-up air conditioning available?				
Are switches easily accessible?				
Are air conditioning and emergency shutoff switches linked?				

Facility Risk Overview – Electricity and Telecommunications

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are generators and transformers located in hazard prone areas, i.e. a basement that floods?				
Is there an emergency lighting system for facility?				
Is the facility protected against power surges?				

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are there back-up power sources available to facility? Please specify.				
Do alternate voice and data transmission services exist?				
Is there a shutdown checklist provided in case of emergency?				

Facility Risk Overview – Facility Access Control

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are there procedures to guard against vandalism, sabotage and unauthorized intrusion?				
Are there windows that can be broken to gain access to the facility?				
Are there procedures for personnel to handle unauthorized intruders?				
Are there procedures for personnel to handle bomb threats?				
Are there procedures for personnel to handle notification of local law enforcement?				
Are security devices checked and tested on a regular basis?				
Are there access controls during regular hours to facility?				
Are there access				

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
controls during off-hours to facility?				

Facility Risk Overview – Fire Exposure

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are the areas surrounding the facility protected from fire? Please specify.				
Are the flooring and ceiling materials non-combustible?				
Can the walls in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Can the doors in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Can the partitions in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Can the floors in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Can the furniture in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Can the window coverings in the facility resist the spread of fire?				
Does the facility have adequate automatic fire extinguishing systems?				
Are flammable or otherwise dangerous materials and activities prohibited from the facility and				

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
surrounding areas?				
Are paper and other supplies stored in open areas in the facility?				
Is there fire and smoke detection equipment in facility?				
Are portable fire extinguishers in suitable locations?				
Are clear and adequate fire instructions clearly posted?				
Are the fire alarm switches clearly visible, unobstructed and easily accessible at points of exit?				
Can the fire alarm be activated manually?				
Is there an emergency evacuation exit, different from the main entrance or exit?				
Is there an evacuation plan posted?				
Does emergency power shut down the air conditioning?				
Is fire and smoke detection equipment checked and tested on a regular basis? How often?				
Can emergency crews easily gain access to the facility?				
Are fire drills held on a regular basis? How often?				

Facility Risk Overview – General Housekeeping

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Is the facility kept clean and orderly?				
Are food and beverages confined to a designated area?				
Is smoking banned in the facility?				
Is there adequate lighting for all areas?				

Facility Risk Overview – Organization and Personnel or Other

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are personnel responsible for facility security?				
Have recovery teams for the facility been selected in the event of a disaster?				
Are there mail or package handling procedures posted? (e.g. chemical or biological or explosives)				

Facility Risk Overview – Other Natural Disaster Exposures

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are you aware of the wind tolerance of the facility? Please specify.				
Is the facility in or near a flood plain?				
Are flood mitigation procedures in place?				
Is all of the electrical equipment grounded for protection against lightning?				

Facility Risk Overview – Water Damage

Risk Overview	Risk Y/N	Risk Level	Vulnerability	Description or Comment
Are documents, records and equipment stored above ground and protected from flooding?				
Are lower facility rooms protected from leaks in overhead water pipes?				
Is there protection against accumulated rainwater or leaks in the rooftop?				
Are floor level electrical junction boxes protected?				

ANNEX B: OTHER COMMONWEALTH CONSIDERATION

Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards (ARMICS)

Office of the Comptroller's Directive 1-07

Required Implementation of Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards

ARMICS is intended to ensure fiscal accountability and safeguard the Commonwealth's assets. Under authority of the Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-800 and 2.2-803, ARMICS mandates the implementation and annual assessment of agency internal control systems in order to provide reasonable assurance of the integrity of all fiscal processes related to the submission of transactions to the Commonwealth's general ledger, submission of financial statement directive materials, compliance with laws and regulations, and stewardship over the Commonwealth's assets. This directive applies to all state offices, departments, boards, commissions, agencies, and penal, educational, and eleemosynary institutions maintained in whole or in part by the Commonwealth

Each agency head is responsible for having agency management document the agency's assessment of internal control strengths, weaknesses and risks over the recording of financial transactions in the general ledger, compliance with the agency's financial reporting requirements, compliance with laws and regulations and stewardship over the Commonwealth's assets. The assessment of internal controls and documentation must be conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards.

For more information on implementing ARMICS, contact armics@doa.virginia.gov.